

NEW THRU 30 HISTORY

History: James

Author: James, the brother of Jesus.

When was the book of James written, where was it composed and who was it written to?: James wrote his letter in the early or middle 40's AD to Jewish Christians living amongst Gentiles outside of Jerusalem and Palestine.

Purpose of the book: James writes in a very strong, pastoral tone, confronting his readers to live an undivided life of devotion to God and quit their hypocritical practices.

How does the book of James fit into the Jewish Culture of the New Testament?: James fits into a genre known as Jewish aphoristic literature. This genre loosely arranges small proverbs or sayings together with more lengthy teachings, both of which instruct the reader to live wisely. A good Old Testament example is the book of Proverbs.

Interesting notes about the book of James: Outside of James introduction of himself, Jesus' name is only mentioned once (2:1).

Main Takeaways from the book of James:

- Mere intellectual belief in Jesus does not qualify as salvation. God is not simply looking for people to agree with him about theological ideas. He's looking for people who will obey. We cannot say we have true saving faith if our actions consistently reflect otherwise.
- God is looking for people of integrity; people who do not speak both good and evil out of the same mouth or people who say they believe one thing but then do another.
- Those with wealth have been blessed in order to be a blessing to the poor.
- Trials and temptation build character and perseverance.